

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ZAGREB 00652 171510Z
ACTION SCS-06

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UNCLAS ZAGREB 652

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC (MUTCHLER, JOHN BRYAN)
SUBJECT: W/W JOHN MUTCHLER, DEC. 22, 1956 WASHINGTON

REF: ZAGREB 643 AND PREVIOUS

1. CONOFF ACCOMPANIED TWO BROTHERS OF MISSING AMCIT JOHN
MUTCHLER AND FAMILY FRIEND SCOTT EARLY TO BOVEC ON JULY 15
TO VIEW SCENE OF DISAPPEARANCE AND TALK WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS.

2. GROUP FIRST MET WITH LOCAL POLICE OFFICIAL WHO PROVIDED
INFORMATION AS RECEIVED FROM LIECKENS AND JOHANNSSON AS WELL
AS STATUS OF MOUNTAIN RESCUE SQUAD TO FIND MUTCHLER. BROTHERS
VIEWED ITEMS OF CLOTHING FOUND BY RESCUE SQUAD AND MADE POSI-
TIVE IDENTIFICATION OF PULLOVER SWEAT SHIRT WORN BY MISSING
AMCIT. DAVE MUTCHLER STATED THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY REPAIRED
A FRONT POCKET ON THE SWEAT SHIRT. HE READILY RECOGNIZED HIS
HANDIWORK. POLICE OFFICIAL SHOWED GROUP AREA AROUND STREAM
BOKA. HE POINTED OUT CLIFF WHICH MUTCHLER AND LIECKENS
CLIMBED ON JULY 5, AREA SEARCHED BY MOUNTAIN RESCUE SQUAD
(INCLUDING CLIFF WHICH THEY DESCENDED BY ROPE IN SEARCH FOR
MUTCHLER), AND LOCATIONS WHERE CLOTHING ITEMS FOUND.

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PAGE 02 ZAGREB 00652 171510Z

3. CRIMINOLOGIST FROM NOVA GORICA REGIONAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS
MET WITH GROUP ON AFTERNOON OF JULY 15 TO DISCUSS POSSIBILI-
TIES OF FOUL PLAY. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION, OFFICIAL STATED
THAT HE OBTAINED SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO SUPPORT VIEW THAT
MUTCHLER INVOLVED ONLY IN CLIMBING ACCIDENT.

4. MEMBER OF MOUNTAIN RESCUE SQUAD TOOK GROUP ON JULY 16 UP

STREAM BOKA TO AREA BELOW BOKA FALLS AND CLIMBED CLIFF OPPOSITE POINT WHERE MUTCHLER LAST SEEN. FOLLOWING DIFFICULT CLIMB, MUTCHLER BROTHERS AND FRIEND EARLY COMMENTED ABOUT ROUGH TERRAIN AND DANGERS OF CLIMBING IN REGION. THEY CONCUR THAT JOHN MUTCHLER MUST BE PRESUMED DEAD.

5. CONOFF ACCOMPANIED MUTCHLER BROTHERS AND EARLY ON RETURN TO ZAGREB WHERE THE THREE YOUTHS DEPARTED FOR ANTWERP VIA MUNICH BY TRAIN EARLY EVENING OF JULY 16. THEY TENTATIVELY PLAN TO RETURN TO US ON THURSDAY JULY 20.

6. POLICE OFFICIALS STATED THAT CASE WILL NOT BE CLOSED UNTIL THE REMAINS OF JOHN MUTCHLER ARE FOUND. MOUNTAIN RESCUE SQUAD WILL CONTINUE SEARCH WHEN WATER LEVEL OF STREAM BOKA AND RIVER SOCA (INTO WHICH THE BOKA FLOWS) HAVE RECEDED. GIVEN CONTINUAL LATE AFTERNOON AND EARLY EVENING RAINS, NO PROGNOSIS CAN BE GIVEN REGARDING TIMING FOR NEXT SEARCH EFFORT. GROBEL

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